

DEFINITIONS

ADDENDUM

Additions to a basic emergency plan which provide more specific information regarding policies, responsibilities and procedures within a given functional area.

APPENDIX

A collection of supplementary material at the end of a plan, or at the end of an addendum. These materials clarify or elaborate information or concepts referred to in a plan or annex.

CASCADE

A telephone recall roster of personnel which flows organizationally downward.

CATASTROPHIC DISASTER RESPONSE GROUP (CDRG)

The CDRG, composed of representatives from all FRP signatory departments and agencies, operates at the national level to provide guidance and policy direction on response coordination and operational issues arising from the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and Emergency Support Function (ESF) response activities. CDRG members are authorized to speak for their agencies at the national policy level. During a disaster the CDRG convenes as necessary, normally at FEMA Headquarters; the Emergency Support Team (EST) provides any needed support.

COLD SITE

A relocation site that is reserved for emergency use, but which requires the installation of equipment and supplies before it can support operations.

CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT (COG)

An emergency preparedness program developed to ensure the continuity of the Federal Government under all emergency conditions including an attack on the United States. It provides for the continuation of governmental authority and executive capability both at headquarters and a number of separate geographic locations.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP)

The capability of an organization to continue to operate, or rapidly restore operations, in an emergency or threat of an emergency. Activities may include crisis management, evacuation of personnel from their normal work locations, and relocation of essential functions to a relocation site.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS (COOP) PLAN

An activity or site-specific plan, that takes into consideration all hazards, in order to ensure the safety of on-site personnel including patients, customers, clients, visitors, or guests during an emergency. It is designed to reduce disruption of operations, protect essential equipment, records, and other assets, and minimize damage and loss. It provides organizational and operational stability, facilitates decision-making, and achieves an orderly recovery from emergency operations.

DESIGNATED/SENIOR OFFICIAL

The highest ranking VA official of any VA facility, or in a shared Federal facility, the highest ranking official of the primary occupant agency of a Federal facility; or alternatively, a designee selected by mutual agreement of occupant agency officials.

DISASTER

An occurrence of a severity and magnitude that normally results in deaths, injuries, and property damage and that cannot be managed through the routine procedures and resources of government. It usually develops suddenly and unexpectedly and requires immediate, coordinated, and effective response by multiple government and private sector organizations to meet human needs and speed recovery.

DISASTER CONTROL COORDINATOR

During a natural or technological disaster involving a field facility, Team B may be activated in VACO. The Disaster Control Coordinator is a designated senior official appointed by the Administration Head, Assistant Secretary, or Other Key Official whose field activity is principally affected. EXPLANATION OF USE OF TEAM B. Prior to COOP Plan, VA had a Disaster Control Team appointed to coordinate field station disasters or emergencies. Its membership mirrored Team B.

DISASTER FIELD OFFICE (DFO)

The DFO is the primary field location in each affected state for the coordination of Federal response and recovery operations. It operates 24 hours per day, as needed, or under a schedule sufficient to sustain Federal operations. The FCO and the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) co-locate at the DFO, along with Federal agency regional representatives and state and local liaison officers, when possible.

DISASTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS CLEARINGHOUSE (DISC)

An organization of FEMA that provides centralized control, deployment, and accountability of disaster information systems, which are basically comprised of communications assets. The DISC is located at FEMA's Mount Weather Emergency Assistance Center.

DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM

Any VA Teams specifically formed to respond to a disaster area during an emergency. Not necessarily medical response teams. As opposed to Emergency Response Teams (ERT) which are interagency teams.

EMERGENCY

A sudden, usually unexpected event, that does or could cause harm to people, resources, property, or the environment. Emergencies can range from localized events that affect a single office in a building, to human, natural, or technological events that damage or threaten to damage, local, regional or, national operations.

EMERGENCY BROADCASTING SYSTEM (EBS)

A communications system that enables the President, Federal, state, and local officials to rapidly disseminate emergency information intended to reduce loss of life and property, and to promote rapid recovery in the event of a natural disaster, a manmade disaster, or an attack on the Nation.

EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

VA field personnel who are assigned emergency preparedness planning responsibilities at a facility or regional level, for example VHA area emergency managers.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)

A single, pre-selected location where disaster information is gathered, public information is disseminated, and coordination of disaster response activity is carried out. The EOC acts as a resource center for on-site response organizations in the field.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) VS. CONTROL CENTER OR VS. COMMAND CENTER

Some Federal, state, or local agencies use the terms interchangeably. Generally though, an EOC is jointly staffed and coordinates response and recovery operations. Command and/or Control Centers are usually organization - specific and have authority over response or recovery units and the authority to deploy or withhold their own assets.

EMERGENCY PLANNER

The official appointed by an Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Other Key Official, or Deputy Assistant Secretary to represent and commit that organization on COOP Planning and emergency preparedness related matters.

EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION (EPI)

The spectrum of information gathered, coordinated, and produced by the Public Information Officer (PIO) Team to inform the public and the media of incident status, and other precautionary and advisory statements to help the public protect themselves and their property from suffering harm.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)

The ERT is the principal interagency group that supports the FCO in coordinating the overall Federal disaster operation. Located at the DFO, the ERT ensures that Federal resources are made available to meet state requirements identified by the SCO. The size and composition of the ERT can range from FEMA regional office staff who are primarily conducting recovery operations to an interagency team having representation from all ESF primary and support agencies undertaking full response and recovery activities.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM ADVANCE ELEMENT (ERT-A)

The ERT-A is the initial Federal group that responds to an incident in the field. It is headed by a team leader from FEMA and is composed of FEMA program and support staff and

representatives from selected ESF primary and support agencies dependant upon the type of emergency or disaster and required assistance.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTIONS (ESF)

The FRP employs a functional approach that groups under 12 ESFs the types of direct Federal assistance that a state is most likely to need (e.g., mass care, health and medical services), as well as the kinds of Federal operations support necessary to sustain Federal response actions (e.g., transportation, communications). ESFs are expected to support one another in carrying out their respective missions. Each ESF is headed by a primary agency designated on the basis of its authorities, resources, and capabilities in the particular functional area.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (EST)

The EST is the Federal interagency group that provides general coordination support to the Regional Operations Center (ROC) staff, Emergency Response Team - Advance Element (ERT-A), and the Emergency Response Team (ERT) response activities in the field. Operating from the FEMA Emergency Information and Coordination Center (EICC) in Washington, DC, the EST is responsible for coordinating and tracking the deployment of Initial Response Resources, DFO kits, Disaster Information Systems Clearinghouse (DISC) packages, and other responder support items to the field. The EST serves as the central source of information at the headquarters level regarding the status of ongoing and planned Federal disaster operations. The EST attempts to resolve policy issues and resource support conflicts forwarded from the ERT. Conflicts that cannot be resolved by the EST are referred to the CDRG.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Those functions stated or implied that are required to be performed by statute or Executive Order, or other functions deemed essential by the heads of principal organizations. Examples would be functions identified by a program office manager as essential to the organization's mission, or those derived from Executive Order 12656, Assignment of Emergency Preparedness Responsibilities, November 18, 1988, which describes Department or agency responsibilities for ensuring Federal continuity of government.

FEDERAL COORDINATING OFFICER (FCO)

If the President declares an "Emergency" or "Major Disaster", a Federal Coordinating Officer will be assigned to coordinate Federal assistance. The Governor will appoint a State Coordinating Officer (SCO). The SCO is the main liaison between the FCO and state and local officials. Once on scene, the FCO is responsible for an initial appraisal of needed assistance. The FCO is also responsible for coordinating all Federal agencies and programs involved in assistance plus, in most cases; the private relief efforts of the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, The Mennonite Disaster Service, and others.

FEDERAL RESPONSE PLAN (FRP)

A plan designed to address the consequences of any disaster or emergency situation in which there is need for Federal response assistance under the authorities of the Stafford Act. It is

applicable to natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, tornadoes, and volcanic eruptions; technological emergencies involving radiological or hazardous material releases; and other incidents requiring Federal assistance under the Act.

FIELD FACILITY

For the purpose of the VA COOP Plan or VA Emergency Preparedness Plan, when we speak of response of field facilities we mean any VA asset outside of VACO that would include Medical Centers, Regional Offices, Cemeteries, and Supply Depots.

FLYAWAY KIT/BUG OUT BAG/DRIVEAWAY KIT

Each organization has a relatively small number of references, databases, procedures, guides and the like, that are used repetitively. Assembling these documents in a briefcase(s) or box(es) so that they may be carried out of the facility to a new site “on the way out” would assist in resuming operations. Identifying such documents would also help in focusing on essential records and operations.

HAZARD VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS

A systematic investigation of the history of regional disasters and their potential to cause damage to the local community’s vulnerability, and the probability of recurrence.

HOT SITE

Relocation site available for immediate occupancy and equipped to permit rapid resumption of essential functions.

INITIAL RESPONSE RESOURCE

Any resource (human, equipment or supplies) that may be deployed immediately dependent on the type of emergency at hand.

MAJOR EMERGENCY

A disaster occurrence or a situation that seriously threatens loss of life and damage to property. It usually develops suddenly and unexpectedly and demands immediate, coordinated, and effective response by government and private sector organizations to protect lives and limit damage to property.

MANAGEMENT CADRE

A nucleus of trained personnel around whom a larger organization can be built and trained, specifically the Department’s emergency relocation team(s).

MEDICAL EMERGENCY RADIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TEAM (MERRT)

A specialized VA medical team formed for disaster response, currently one radiological team exists. Others are planned.

NORMAL DUTY HOURS

The hours between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

PRIMARY HAZARDS

A primary hazard is one that occurs at the site. (See also Secondary Hazard)

PRIME VENDOR

Prime Vendor is a business concern that functions as the purchasers' source of distribution for a wide array of products as identified by the customer.

A prime vendor is responsible for the maintenance of adequate inventory levels and for just in time delivery of goods, produced by various suppliers, to the VA and OGA customer upon order. VA prime vendor contracts cover pharmaceutical, subsistence and medical & surgical supplies.

REGIONAL RESPONSE ELEMENT

Regional Response Elements are any VA field personnel requested and sent to staff DFO's, ERT-A's, ERT's or any interagency response teams.

REGIONAL RESPONSE ORGANIZATION

The VA organization of the VA liaison representative, in any of the 10 Federal regions, that is tasked to respond to an emergency that may not necessarily be within his/her particular Federal region.

SECONDARY HAZARDS

A secondary hazard is one that arises from the impact of a primary hazard. As an example a site may be well protected from fire due to type of construction, Halon or sprinkler systems, close proximity to trained fire fighting resources. However, a large explosion a few blocks away ruptures water lines, cuts power cables, and blocks traffic, then that site which relies on paper files, or uses other flammable materials otherwise carefully protected could make the fire a serious secondary hazard.

TEAM

A group organized to work together: in this case, specific to emergency relocation purposes team of VA employees.

TEAM A

Also known as the Secretary's Cadre consists of the Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and certain Key Officials. Prescribes policy and directs Team B.

TEAM B

The Team that is led by the Deputy Secretary, it commands and controls operations and is comprised of the Deputy Under Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries and their top management teams and are assigned to the Martinsburg Relocation Site at the direction of the Secretary.

TEAM C

Consists of associated policy, direction, and oversight functions in direct support of Team B. The team members may be located at various field facilities that are in direct communication with Team B.

VA ELEMENT

VA personnel assigned to staff any interagency response team or unit.

VA REGIONAL OFFICE (VARO)

Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office.